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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 002459

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: CONVERSATION WITH KDP REPRESENTATIVE ROWSCH
SHAWAYS

Classified By: Political Minister Counselor Gary A. Grappo for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY. On September 7, former Deputy Prime Minister Rowsch Shaways arrived in Baghdad to represent the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) at UNAMI's September 8 High Level Task Force (HLTF) meeting. Shaways has not been a regular fixture in Baghdad politics for over 9 months. As KRG President Masoud Barzani's most senior and trusted advisor, Shaways has the authority to represent Barzani's interests and speak on his behalf. Shaways pledged to attend weekly HLTF meetings in Baghdad but does not believe that the GOI is taking the process seriously. Regarding the disputed area of Kirkuk, Shaways insisted that Article 140 process continue and that agreement on a hydrocarbons revenue sharing law will ameliorate Arab-Kurd tensions. With the upcoming national elections, Shaways predicts that PM Maliki will need the Kurds to survive but warns that he will renege on whatever deal he makes. Shaways asks that the U.S. play a more active role in Arab-Kurd issues, recognizing that U.S. influence will diminish as the U.S. military withdraws. END SUMMARY.

KURDS ARE READY TO DEFINE A BORDER

12. (C) Shaways described the UNAMI process like a "diet drink." He agreed with UNAMI to negotiate with the GOI on what he considers the "small stuff" - the Confidence Building Measures of each DIBs report. However, he asserted that the Kurds did their due diligence and studied each report thoroughly. He is ready to discuss defining the "border." Shaways said he still believes that GOI is not serious about process and that GOI presentative Sadiq Rikabi who is lazy in his approach, appears to be stalling. Shaways said that it will take many meetings per each report. He confessed that his second on the Kurdish side Khalid Schwany has not made an appearance. He added that there was no sign of Rikabi's #2.

KIRKUK - ARTICLE 140 OR BUST

13. (C) When asked about the possibility of negotiating a solution on Kirkuk, Shaways believes that an agreement on hydrocarbons revenue sharing will simplify a resolution on Kirkuk. He attested that hydrocarbons agreement can be achieved with the U.S., KRG and PM Maliki in the room. He insisted that, "No matter what, Article 140 process must continue." He acknowledged the 'sluggishness' of the claims process and welcomed any assistance from the U.S. to speed up the normalization processes. Shaways does not believe in brokering a power-sharing agreement for the Provincial Council. Rather, he wants a provincial election vote to determine power-sharing. He said that he does not believe that the Kurds would overwhelm a provincial election because he claims that there isn't an overwhelming majority of Kurds in Kirkuk. Personally, he prefers a confirmatory referendum on a negotiated settlement vice an up-down referendum on

Kirkuk. He has recognized that the U.S. wants a more active role in resolving Kirkuk, but it should not disrupt or undermine the UNAMI process that is finally underway. He opts for a parallel discussion on Kirkuk while UNAMI DIBs and Article 140 processes continue.

STATUS OF KRG

14. (C) In the wake of the Iraqi Kurdistan Parliamentary elections, Shaways does not deny that President Talabani's presence in Baghdad weakened the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) in Sulemaniyah and strengthened KDP in the KRG. It Q(PUK) in Sulemaniyah and strengthened KDP in the KRG. It also allowed for Goran List to perform well. He is dismayed that KRG PM Nechirvan Barzani will not remain PM, reasoning that PUK lost its support in Sulemaniyah to Nawshirwan Mustafa and the Change List. "Talabani and Barham have a lot to prove." Shaways insisted that Nechirvan will be heavily involved in KDP politics and may still have an official role in KRG. Shaways accused Nawshirwan Mustafa of being only interested in consolidating power away from Talabani in Sulemaniyah.

15. (C) He said it was important to replace Barham Salih's DPM spot even for the remaining four months. He anticipates a long delay in government formation and the Kurds will need an able person in the position. He confirmed that he has turned down the interim position. He cited that Nechirvan wanted to come to Baghdad as DPM but his lack of Arabic was the deciding factor. He added that neither Water Minister Latif Rashid, Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari, or former KRG Speaker Adnan Mufti are slated for the DPM role.

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NATIONAL ELECTIONS - DANGEROUS GAMES

16. (C) In the run-up to the national elections, Shaways stated that Goran List Leader Nawshirwan Mustafa does not understand national issues and plans to jump into the game blind. He added that KDP-PUK still hopes to persuade Nawshirwan to form a united front at the national level to once again make them a powerful parliamentary bloc to be reckoned with. Shaways warned if Nawshirwan aligns with Maliki, he will alienate himself from the Kurdish people. Shaways stated that the Kurds will retain Iraqi Presidency and Foreign Ministry. "A Presidency without veto is not more than a figurehead, but we are still willing to insist that it go to Talabani." In holding on to two of Iraq's most external positions, he expects the Kurds to lose some ministries.

17. (C) Shaways opined that Maliki's exclusion from the Iraqi National Alliance (INA) means that Maliki will need the Kurds. "He has to decide whether he will buy our support on KRG-GOI issues before the elections or just wait until after." Shaways smiled and said, "If he waits until after we know he will renege on all promises." He added that Maliki's exclusion from the INA will also force him to combine with a rag tag set of Sunni groups, pushing all his Baathist paranoia buttons. Shaways said that VP Adil Abd al-Mehdi is the best PM candidate out there.

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